

REVIEWS OF BOOKS : BOEKRESENSIES

GASTRO-ENTEROLOGY

Synopsis of Gastroenterology. By Rudolf Schindler, M.D., F.A.C.P. Pp. xvi + 395. \$7.75. New York and London: Grune & Stratton, Inc. 1957.

Contents: I. Gastro-intestinal lesions and symptoms connected with diseases of other organ systems. II. General etiology of gastro-intestinal diseases. III. General symptomatology of gastro-intestinal disorders. IV. Examination. V. Diseases of mouth, pharynx, and salivary glands. VI. Diseases of the esophagus. VII. Diseases of stomach and duodenum. VIII. Intestinal obstruction. IX. Appendicitis. X. Diseases of jejunum and ileum. XI. Diseases of colon and rectum. XII. Diseases of the liver. XIII. Diseases of the gallbladder and of the biliary ducts. XIV. Diseases of the pancreas. XV. Diseases of the peritoneum. XVI. Gastro-intestinal symptoms due to poisonous reptiles and insects; parasites of the alimentary tract. XVII. General therapy of gastro-intestinal diseases. Index.

This book is a reminder of a past era and makes an interesting contrast with recent British publications in this field. Although Dr. Schindler has worked in the United States for many years his ideas obviously represent pre-war Continental practice. Even though this is a 'practical' book the discussions on aetiology and pathology are of a disappointingly poor standard. Acceptable recent advances are rarely adequately discussed; for instance, how can one today dismiss the aetiology of fibrocystic disease of the pancreas and hepatolenticular degeneration as 'unknown'?

Suggested clinical techniques are often out of date; he recommends the iodine test for bilirubinuria (ignoring 'ictotest') and the icteric index for jaundice.

Dr. Schindler is a noted gastroscopist and draws detailed conclusions from his observations of the stomach lining—but neglects to discuss how biopsy studies of the mucosa have undermined many of his concepts.

Descriptions of various diseases tend to be incomplete and usually pertaining to the later stages. Nor is therapy a strong point—it is usually old-fashioned. Examples of this are spa treatment for 'chronic non-calculous cholecystitis' and 'chronic enteritis' and

long-continued daily gastric lavages for 'chronic superficial gastritis'. Dr. Schindler is admittedly hostile to the current psychosomatic approach in many gastro-intestinal disorders. Antibiotics and corticosteroids are poorly discussed—why recommend streptomycin for infective hepatitis?

The book is untidily written and badly edited—but has a good index.

D.M.K.

CONGRESS OF GASTRO-ENTEROLOGY

International Congress of Gastro-enterology. Fifth Meeting of L'Association des Sociétés Européennes et Méditerranéennes de Gastro-Entérologie. London, July 18-21, 1956. Pp. xix + 634. Illustrations. Basel (Switzerland) and New York: S. Karger. 1957.

Contents: Non-malignant Conditions of the Oesophagus. Premalignant Conditions of the Alimentary Tract. Ulcerative Colitis.

This volume contains the proceedings of the 5th meeting of the International Congress of Gastro-enterology, which was held in London in July 1956. By all accounts it was a most successful congress. It was attended not only by members of the Association from almost every country in Europe, but also by many visitors from the British Commonwealth, the USA and other parts of the world.

Three main themes are dealt with: non-malignant conditions of the oesophagus, pre-malignant conditions of the alimentary canal, and ulcerative colitis. In addition there are included in the volume 30 short papers covering a wide variety of subjects of general gastro-enterological interest. Under the heading 'discussion' there are also numerous short contributions which relate results of recent research.

The section on diseases of the oesophagus deals exhaustively with many aspects of the condition of hiatus hernia, in which field great strides have been made in recent years. The anatomical and physiological aspects of the junction of the oesophagus and the stomach present difficult problems and many of the papers are devoted to a study of this subject. Much of the new work is the result of ingenious methods of radiological investigation, and the contributions in this field are particularly outstanding. There has been some new work on achalasia of the cardia, but the most interesting papers from a clinical point of view are those which deal with peptic oesophagitis, 'reflux' oesophagitis, and other conditions due to incompetence of the cardia.

The section on ulcerative colitis is extremely good and the collection of papers probably represents the most informed and up-to-date work on this subject. There has been much new pathological work on this condition, especially exfoliative cytology and rectal biopsy studies, but there is still no knowledge of its aetiology. There are the usual arguments about medical versus surgical treatment, and in the latter there seems to be, now, a consensus that ileostomy with colectomy is the operation of choice. In regard to medical treatment there are those who are enthusiastic about the value of the corticosteroids and others, like Bergen—a veteran worker in this field—who caution against its use. The most violent disagreements, however, are evident in the discussion on the value of psychotherapy in the treatment of this condition.

The section on pre-malignant conditions includes a large variety of subjects. The short papers cover many recent advances, such as hepatic coma, carcinosarcoma, uropepsin studies etc.

The book is elegantly produced with numerous X-rays and diagrams. Its value would have been enhanced if summaries in English had been included of the articles in other languages. Nevertheless it is a mine of information, extremely interesting, and it can be highly recommended.

L.M.

SPONTANEOUS HAEMOSTASIS—A SYMPOSIUM

Ier Symposium de la Fondation Valentino Baldacci (Madrid, 27-30 mai 1955). Hémostase spontanée, plaquettes sanguines et parois vasculaires. J. Roskam, President, J. F. Ackroyd, A. Baserga, Y. Bounameaux, P. De Nicola, C. Elosegui, R. Feissly, A. Fieschi, J. Guasch, J. Hugues, F. Koller, R. G. Macfarlane, J. P. Soulier, S. Van Creveld. Pp. 190. Pisa: Omnia Medica. 1956.

Contents: Avant-propos. Ordre des travaux du symposium. Commentaires accompagnant la projection de trois films. Echanges de vues sur les différents processus participant à l'arrêt des saignements et à la prévention des hémorragies non traumatiques. I. Modification de la paroi vasculaire lésée la rendant apte à se couvrir de plaquettes. Ses rapports avec la coagulation et l'immunité. II. Adhésion des plaquettes à une surface étrangère modifiée par le plasma (ou le sérum). Ses rapports avec la coagulation. III. Formation de fibrine 'concrète' dans l'hémostase spontanée. IV. Phénomènes vaso-moteurs dans l'hémostase spontanée. V. Rétraction de la fibrine et son rôle dans l'hémostase spontanée. VI. Rôle des plaquettes dans la prévention des saignements. VII. Autres problèmes. Conclusions. Annexes (rapports précirculés). Bibliographie. Index alphabétique des matières.

The first symposium of the Baldacci Foundation was held in Madrid in May 1955 on the initiative of Professor Ugo Baldacci. The Foundation was dedicated to the study of the roles played by the blood platelets and vessel walls in the spontaneous arrest of non-traumatic bleeding as well as the genesis and prevention of this condition.

Professor Roskam of the University of Liège presided at the conference, which was attended by many distinguished research workers in the field of haematology from many universities in Europe. Individual reports embodying the views of the authors were circulated beforehand and before the discussions began 3 films illustrating aspects of the problem were projected. The subsequent debates and expressions of opinion, which were carried on a high scientific plane, were registered on sound film and edited without significant alteration. They stand, as this book shows, as a model of precise exposition and courteous disagreement.

The symposium applied itself to different facets of its self-imposed task, viz.: (1) Changes occurring in the injured vascular wall making it suitable for the formation of a mass of platelets; their relation to coagulation. (2) Adherence of platelets to a foreign surface modified by plasma or serum; relation to coagulation. (3) Formation of fibrin in spontaneous haemostasis. (4) Vaso-motor phenomena in spontaneous haemostasis. (5) Contraction

of fibrin and its role in spontaneous haemostasis. (6) The role of the blood platelets in the prevention of bleeding.

Each of these problems was discussed in turn and we read the actual remarks made by each speaker at the time.

From a wealth of material I choose a few of the scientific observations presented to the conference.

Experiments with a suspension of blood platelets in saline showed that they underwent no change in form on contact with the glass walls of the containing vessel, even in the presence of calcium. When, however, a previously incubated mixture of haemophilic globulin together with the Christmas factor and calcium is added to the platelet suspension, individual platelets lose their Brownian movement and adhere to each other. In this and other phenomena 'Intermediate Product One' plays an essential role. During the discussion on the adherence of blood platelets, Professor Roskam, president of the symposium, put forward the view that each platelet was surrounded by what he called an 'atmosphere' of plasma. This would explain their behaviour in the experiments detailed by Professor Bounameaux of Liège.

Observations and measurements on sectioned arterioles in the ear or mesentery of the rabbit, the wing of the bat and the web of the frog revealed that the primary constriction following trauma is followed shortly by a dilatation to the normal calibre.

Tables and graphs throughout the text illustrate the theories advanced by the various speakers at each of the sessions devoted to these problems. And so many brilliant experiments are detailed, so many contrasting opinions expressed, that the reviewer's task can only be that of recording the great value of the symposium, not only as a forum for the exchange of ideas but as a notable contribution to this particular domain of physiology.

The book is well printed. There is a short subject index and a very extensive list of references. The inclusion of separate short reports, many in English, written by those participating in the symposium helps considerably to a proper appreciation of the work, which is rounded off by 15 short paragraphs summarizing, by unanimous consent, the conclusions of the Conference.

C.K.O'M.

UROLOGY

Principles of Urology—An Introductory Textbook to the Diseases of the Urogenital Tract. By Meredith F. Campbell, M.S., M.D., F.A.C.S. Pp. xxii + 622. 319 Figures. \$9.50. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company. 1957.

Contents: 1. Introduction to Urology. 2. Urologic Symptoms and Their Interpretation. 3. The Clinical History and Urologic Examination. 4. Applied Anatomy and Physiology of the Urogenital Tract. 5. Urinary Obstruction. 6. Embryology and Anomalies of the Urogenital Tract. 7. Infections of the Urinary Tract. 8. The Male Reproductive Tract. 9. Neuromuscular Uropathy. 10. Injuries of the Urogenital Tract. 11. Urinary Calculus Disease. 12. Tumours of the Urogenital Tract. 13. The Adrenals. 14. Urology of the Female. Bibliography. Questions. Index.

From an author and teacher of this standing one expects the best and in the 'Principles of Urology' we have an outstanding text-book for students.

Dr. Meredith Campbell has 'Clinical Pediatric Urology' (1951) and the 3-volume 'Urology' (1954) to his credit. This present book is designed and compiled for the practitioner seeing the occasional urological problem and particularly for the undergraduate student. It covers all aspects of urology adequately and the concise and clear exposition makes reading a pleasure. The text is generously illustrated with large and clear photographs.

Special emphasis is given to basic applied anatomical and physiological considerations and the special methods of examination in urology. These are commonplace knowledge to the urologist but require clear exposition to the student.

One expects it from this author and finds in this book a particularly good chapter on congenital anomalies of the genital and urinary systems.

The minor urological procedures like reduction of paraphimosis, meatotomy, circumcision, and passage of urethral sounds and catheters, are fully discussed and illustrated, whereas the finer technical details of major urological operations and controversial theoretical considerations are omitted or summarily dealt with.

Throughout the book the author gives evidence that he is aiming to teach the student and not the expert. In my opinion the emphasis has been put where it belongs, so that this book is second to none as a first-class medium of instruction for the student in urology.

An interesting feature and a stimulating experience is introduced by a list of questions at the end of the book with page references to the answers. The special chapter on word-usage and the derivation of words often found in urology will be gratefully acknowledged by the more enquiring student.

The book is clearly indexed and printed in bold type on glossy paper.

P.J.M.R.

ANAESTHETICS

Recent Advances in Anaesthesia and Analgesia (including Oxygen Therapy). 8th Edition. By C. Langton Hewer, M.B., B.S. (Lond.), M.R.C.P. (Lond.), F.F.A.R.C.S. (Eng.) and J. Alfred Lee, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., M.M.S.A., F.F.A.R.C.S. (Eng.). Pp. viii + 295. 95 Illustrations. 40s. net. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1957.

Contents: 1. Premedication and Sedation. 2. Inhalation Anaesthetics. 3. Apparatus for Inhalation Anaesthesia. 4. Developments in Endotracheal Anaesthesia. 5. The Explosion Risk in Anaesthesia. 6. Intravenous Anaesthesia. 7. Muscle Relaxants. 8. Local Analgesia. 9. The Present Position of Subarachnoid and Extradural Analgesia. 10. Reduction of Haemorrhage during Operation. 11. The Phenothiazine Derivatives. 12. Induced Hypothermia. 13. Collapse, Shock and Resuscitation. 14. Anaesthesia for Diagnostic Procedures. 15. Anaesthesia for Thoracic Surgery. 16. Anaesthesia for Operations on the Heart and Great Vessels. 17. Anaesthesia and Analgesia for Abdominal Surgery. 18. Anaesthesia in Obstetrics. 19. Complications of Anaesthesia. 20. Psychological Aspects of Anaesthesia and Analgesia. 21. Anaesthetic Charts and Records. 22. Oxygen Therapy. Index.

This work has been a very popular book throughout its seven editions which have appeared since 1932. Equally popular has been 'A Synopsis of Anaesthesia' by J. Alfred Lee. These two authors have now joined forces in preparing this 8th edition of 'Recent Advances'.

Unlike the previous seven editions, which have presented recent advances together with a brief description of older knowledge, this 8th edition deals only with advances during the past few years. The general lay-out and division of Anaesthesia into various fields remains unchanged. The subject matter is presented in the same concise, concentrated form as previously, and one may say that it is set out in such a way that the book provides a key to a vast amount of knowledge rather than providing the knowledge in full. The information contained in the various sections has been culled from a very large number of sources, embracing a variety of points of view. One of the most attractive features of the book is the full bibliography accompanying each chapter and comprising a total of some 850 references to recent literature.

This is a book which should be of the greatest value to the practising anaesthetist who has difficulty in keeping up with the literature, and to the postgraduate student in anaesthetics.

A.B.B.

EPIDEMIOLOGY

Principles of Epidemiology. By Ian Taylor, M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H. and John Knowelden, M.D., D.P.H. Pp. vii + 299. 26 Illustrations. 30s. net. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1957.

Contents: 1. Describing Disease Patterns. 2. Mortality Rates. 3. Measurement of Morbidity. 4. Special Surveys. 5. Agents of Infection. 6. Transmission of Infection. 7. Host Reaction. 8. Other Host Factors. 9. Crowding and Dispersal. 10. Time. 11. Place. 12. The Family. Appendix A. Appendix B. Index.

The authors, as set out in their preface, have successfully attained their object of bringing to the reader's notice the principles of epidemiology. The majority of the examples used to prove or illustrate their points are concerned with infectious diseases, but the treatise has been planned and set out on a much wider framework, as will be obvious to anyone who even opens the book.

The first section deals exclusively with medical statistics, rates and the correct manner of collecting and handling morbidity and mortality figures. The remainder of the book deals with epidemiological principles and the effect of overcrowding, school activity and attendance, home circumstances, social status and travelling on the trends of spread and occurrence of the various infectious diseases. The assertion that there is a racial susceptibility of the African and Negro groups to tuberculosis is rather startling and something which your reviewer cannot with the best will in the world accept.

The style is pleasing and easily readable, the paper is of a good

quality and the publication has a useful index. Printer's and other errors are conspicuous by their absence.

A useful book and one to be wholeheartedly recommended to health officers and students.

E.D.C.

PULMONARY COMPLICATIONS IN ABDOMINAL SURGERY

Pulmonary Complications of Abdominal Surgery. By Anthony R. Anscombe, M.S. (Lond.), F.R.C.S. (Eng.). Pp. x + 121. 36 Figures. 20s. net. London: Lloyd-Luke (Medical Books) Ltd. 1957.

Contents: Preface. I. Introduction. II. Post-operative Complications. III. The Mechanism of Breathing. IV. Investigation of the Pulmonary Mechanical Function. V. Pre-operative Considerations. VI. The Effects of Operation. VII. Post-operative Factors. VIII. Effect on the Total Capacity of the Lungs. IX. Pulmonary Complications. X. Pulmonary Embolism. XI. Post-operative Hypoxaemia. XII. Conclusions. References. Appendix. Index.

This little book is material used in the 1955 Moynihan Prize Essay and a thesis for the degree of Master of Surgery in the University of London. There is thus an extensive review of the literature on post-operative pulmonary complications, and additional observations are reported which are based on a study of 146 patients by means of vital spirogram readings using a spirometer designed to eliminate the inertia of most other machines.

The findings are well documented and indicate clearly the very marked decrease of vital capacity following upper abdominal incisions. Conclusions are drawn from these findings and a few helpful suggestions are made for the prevention of the severer complications.

Altogether it is a pleasant and instructive book to read and it can be recommended to surgeons and physicians alike. The author would be providing a service if he had condensed his material into one or more short articles for publication, for the benefit of those surgeons who prefer their literature in pre-digested form.

D.J.duP.

ENDOCRINES—CIBA FOUNDATION REPORT

Ciba Foundation Colloquia on Endocrinology. Volume 10. Regulation and Mode of Action of Thyroid Hormones. Editors for the Ciba Foundation, G. E. W. Wolstenholme, O.B.E., M.A., M.B., B.Ch., and Elaine C. P. Millar, A.H.-W.C., A.R.I.C. Pp. xii+311. 114 illustrations. 48s. net. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1957.

Contents: Chairman's opening remarks. Hypothalamus-pituitary-thyroid relationships. Contribution to the regulation of thyroid activity. The influence of the central nervous system on the control of thyrotrophin secretion. Pituitary cytology in relation to thyrotrophic hormone secretion. Effects of hypophysectomy on organic iodine formation in rat thyroids. Factors influencing the thyroidal iodide pump. The 'feed-back' hypothesis of the control of thyroid function. General Discussion. Hormone synthesis in the iodine-deficient thyroid gland. Enzymic aspects of thyronine metabolism and its iodinated derivatives. The metabolism of thyroid hormones by kidney and the biological activity of the products. On the presence of 3:5:3'-triiodothyroacetic acid and 3:3'-diiodo-thyronine in rat muscle and kidney after administration of 3:5:3'-triiodo-L-thyronine. The distribution and metabolism of thyroid hormones. The deiodination of thyroid hormones *in vitro*. General Discussion. Hepatic regulation of thyroxine metabolism. Thyroid hormones at the peripheral tissue level: metabolism and mode of action. Cellular actions of thyroxine and similar compounds. Some observations on the clinical effects of triiodothyroacetic acid. The influence of the thyroid gland upon immune responses of different species to bacterial infection. General Discussion.

The Ciba Foundation has now sponsored 40 conferences, 15 of which have been devoted to subjects of endocrinological interest. The latest symposium deals exclusively with the thyroid gland, or, rather, with certain aspects of it.

Particular attention has been paid to the role of the hypothalamus as a regulator of thyroid function and to the relationships which exist between the hypothalamus, both lobes of the pituitary gland, the thyroid and adrenal glands. Histochemical studies of the pituitary gland in relation to thyroid function are discussed and modern methods of investigation—notably chromatography and the use of radio-active isotopes—have been applied to the elucidation of the nature and mode of action of thyroid hormones.

The fundamental character of these colloquia is one of informal discussion by international experts in each field. These discussions are reported in detail, so that as much may be learned from perusal of these 'post-mortems' as from the papers themselves. It is interesting to observe the divergence of opinion which has resulted from the recent intensive investigation of thyroid physiology and it is clear that many basic problems remain to be solved. The exchange of ideas in highly critical gatherings of this sort is

an excellent stimulus to full-scale attempts to solve these difficulties.

The clinical applications of much that is reported in this volume are indirect, so that it is unlikely to be of value, except to those engaged in similar research or specifically interested in thyroid physiology. To these, however, the main value of this book will lie in its excellent presentation of a 'bird's-eye view' of the latest approaches to problems of thyroid function.

We must once again thank the Ciba Foundation for the stimulus they provide to international medical research.

R.H.

TEXT-BOOK OF MEDICINE

Textbook of Medicine. 12th Edition. By Various Authors. Edited by Sir John Conybeare, K.B.E., M.C., D.M. (Oxon.) F.R.C.P. and W. N. Mann, M.D. (Lond.), F.R.C.P. Pp. xvi+861. 39 Figures. 32 X-ray Plates. 42s. net. + 1s. 9d. Postage Abroad. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1957.

Contents: Diseases Due to Infection. Tuberculosis. Venereal Diseases. Tropical Diseases. Helminthic Diseases. Diseases of Infants. Poisonings and Intoxications. Disorders of the Endocrine System. Diseases of Metabolism. Diseases of the Blood, Lymphatic Glands, and Spleen. Diseases of the Alimentary Canal. Diseases of the Liver, Gall-Bladder, Pancreas, and Peritoneum. Diseases of the Cardiovascular System. Diseases of the Respiratory System. Renal Diseases. Affections of the Joints and Bones. Diseases of the Nervous System. Psychological Medicine. Common Diseases of the Skin. Appendices. Index.

The 12th edition of this well-known textbook made its appearance in April of this year. The list of contributors include a number of eminent British authorities. Since the 11th edition in 1954 there have been many changes, in particular the complete re-writing of the section on diseases of the nervous system. There has also been considerable alteration in the section on diseases of the skin and the adrenals. It is heartening to see that articles on salt and water metabolism and porphyria have been included in the section on metabolism. The section on endocrine disorders has been written by Dr. Bishop and a short account of the use of corticotrophin and cortisone has been included. In these days of widespread and uncritical use of steroid therapy this is to be welcomed in a text-book of medicine. The side effects and complications due to overdosage are mentioned and a very brief account of conditions which may be treated with cortisone or corticotrophin.

Although on the whole the book is well balanced there are some possible defects, e.g. in the treatment of hypertension, whereas 'hypotensive drugs' is given as a main sub-heading the only two mentioned are hexamethonium bromide and rauwolfia serpentina. More emphasis may well have been put on drug therapy, including a discussion of the dangers and advantages of such treatment. Dr. Osman has contributed the section on renal disease and has covered it well although he has still retained such terms as larval nephrosis and necrotizing nephrosis. He has always been an enthusiastic advocate of the treatment of the nephrotic syndrome by the administration of alkaline salts. This is not generally successful nor is his opinion on the mode of action of ACTH and cortisone acceptable. 'Since they act by causing, among other changes, a relative alkalosis, which is more simply obtained, and more easily controlled, when alkaline sales are given directly'. Decapsulation cannot be recommended as a treatment of the nephrotic syndrome and the 4 lines devoted to it could be usefully omitted from the text.

A book such as this will always be popular with the students as a bird's eye view of medicine as medicine is given within the scope of its 827 pages. The book is well produced, well printed, and in the main the information is clearly and concisely set out. On the whole, debatable opinions and forms of treatment are avoided. The therapeutic section included in the chapter on diseases of the skin is sufficiently short so as not to lead to further despair on the part of the struggling student. Of more particular

interest is the section on the antibiotic drugs, which is a much needed and important section of every text-book of medicine. The reviewer cannot agree that there are no serious toxic effects of penicillin except skin sensitization and fever.

For the student this book serves well, not only as an introduction to medicine, but as a guide and friend throughout the clinical years. It has justifiably achieved popularity as one of the best text-books of medicine.

L.E.

CURRENT THERAPY

1957 Current Therapy. Edited by Howard F. Conn, M.D. Pp. xxx+731. \$11.00. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company. 1957.

Contents: I. The Infectious Diseases. II. Diseases of the Respiratory System. III. Diseases of the Cardiovascular System. IV. Diseases of the Blood and Spleen. V. Diseases of the Digestive System. VI. Disorders of Metabolism and Nutrition. VII. Diseases of the Endocrine System. VIII. Diseases of the Urogenital Tract. IX. The Venereal Diseases. X. The Allergic Diseases. XI. Diseases of the Skin. XII. Diseases of the Nervous System. XIII. Diseases of the Locomotor System. XIV. Obstetric and Gynecologic Conditions. XV. Diseases Due to Physical and Chemical Agents. XVI. Appendices and Indices.

This volume, the ninth in the series started in 1949, contains a considerable amount of new information. The difficulty that the modern doctor has in keeping abreast of medical literature is a very considerable one and this is an attempt to encompass within the covers of a single volume a great deal of current medical treatment.

The book consists of a compilation of essays or brief comments by a great number of contributors, many of whom are reputed experts. Although the contributors are largely American, there are one or two contributors from outside the United States, notably Smirk on the treatment of hypertension and Sheehan on the treatment of hypopituitarism. The Editor claims that between 30 and 50% of the material in each annual edition is new or has been significantly modified. In a few instances, where there is a different opinion, more than one author has contributed to the subject, but in other instances, such as in the article on Diabetes Mellitus, no less than the following authorities have combined: G. G. Duncan, L. J. Palmer, H. G. Ricketts and H. F. Root. The busy practitioner who wishes to use this book should remember that the articles reflect the current thinking of these authors. Some of their opinions may not meet with general acceptance.

Whether the issue of a book of this nature, in which everything from hairy tongue to haemorrhoids is covered, is warranted every year, is open to question. In a review of this kind it is quite impossible to cover critically even a small fraction of the book, but one has the feeling that in many of the fields where there has been little advance, perhaps the subject matter might have been considerably curtailed. On the other hand if the book is claimed to cover current therapy comprehensively then some sections are quite inadequate e.g. the treatment of uraemia.

In the preface a claim is made that the authors have had the opportunity to give a current estimate of the effectiveness of new drugs, but this is not always fulfilled, e.g. in the treatment of congestive failure, although aminometramide is mentioned as a diuretic and the doses are given, there is no critical evaluation of this drug. It could perhaps easily have been omitted. It will disappoint the South African reader that in the section of disorders of metabolism and nutrition porphyria is not mentioned.

Of use to the American reader in particular will be the list of principal active ingredients in various commercial products. In addition there is a section in which a roster of drugs is given.

The book is well printed, although the double format may well be irritating to some readers. It will be of value to the busy practitioner in keeping him abreast of many of the advances in treatment, and is a useful reference book.

L.E.